

PARSONS'S MINOR THEATRE.



Byler, del.

Printed for J. B. Smith, at the Theatre Royal, London.

1823.

THE DESERT ISLAND.

A DRAMATIC POEM,

IN THREE ACTS.

WRITTEN BY ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

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1793.

The Desert Island.

MR. MURPHY, the author of this beautiful dramatic Poem, which was brought before the public in the season of 1759, acknowledges that the ground-work of his fable is taken from a little piece of one act, entitled *L'Isola Disabitata*, or *The Uninhabited Island*, which came from the elegant and interesting pen of the *Abbe Metastasio*; and it is worthy of remark, that Mr. Murphy's comedy of *The Way to Keep Him*, and his dramatic tale of *The Desert Island*, were represented for the first time on the same night.

While we have a *Siddons*; a *Pope*; a *Powell*; and last, not least in love—a *Kemble*, to personify the sorrowing heroine of *The Desert Island*, its revival at one of our three theatres might prove acceptable to the public, and profitable to the Manager.

Our Poet has been peculiarly happy in the pictures he has drawn of secluded nature. The descriptions, which he has given to *Constantia*, of the captivating scenery which surrounds her, enrich a production worthy of the warmest encomiums of every lover of refined sentiment and genuine poesy.

We flatter ourselves that our generous patrons will approve of our presenting them, occasionally, with subjects similar to the present; and that such subjects will be considered as adding to the value of their volumes, by giving to them that variety which ought to form a grand feature in every collection.

Dramatis Personae.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

Ferdinand,	-	MR. HOLLAND
Henrico,	-	MR. FLEETWOOD,

Women.

Constantia,	-	MRS. PRITCHARD
Sylvia,	-	MISS PRITCHARD.

PROLOGUE,

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN BY MR. GARRICK

IN THE CHARACTER OF A DRUNKEN POET.

ALL, all shall out—all that I know and feel;
I will, by Heav'n—to higher powers appeal!—
Behold a bard!—no author of to-night—
No, no,—they cant't say that, with all their spite:
Ay, you may frown (*looking behind the scenes*) I'm at you,
great and small—
Your Poet, Players, Managers and all!—
These fools within here, swear that I'm in liquor,
My passion warms me—makes my utterance thicker;
I totter too—but that's the gout and pain,—
French wines, and living high, have been my bane —
From all temptations now, I wisely steer me;
Nor will I suffer one fine woman near me.
And this I sacrifice, to give you pleasure—
For you I've coin'd my brains,—and here's the treasure!

[*Pulls out a manuscript.*]

A treasure this of profit and delight!
And all thrown by for his damn'd stuff to-night:—
This is a play would water ev'ry eye!
If I but look upon't, it makes me cry:
This play would tears from blood-stain'd soldiers draw,—
And melt the bowels of hard-hearted law!
Would fore and aft the storm-proof sailor rake;
Keep turtle-eating aldermen awake!
Would the cold blood of ancient maidens thrill,
And make ev'n pretty younger tongues lie still.
This Play not ev'n Managers would refuse,
Had Heav'n but given 'em any brains, to chuse!—

[*Puts up his manuscript.*]

PROLOGUE.

Your bard to-night, bred in the ancient school,
 Designs and measures all by critic rule;
 'Mongst friends—it goes no farther—he's a fool.
 So very classic, and so very dull—
 His *Desert Island* is his own dear skull:
 No soul to make the Play-house ring and rattle,
 No trumpets, thunder, ranting, storms, or battle!
 But all your fine poetic prittle-prattle.
 The plot is this—A lady's cast away—
 “ Long before the beginning of the play;”
 And they are taken by a fisherman,
 The lady and the child—'tis Bays's plan—
 So on he blunders—He's an Irishman,—
 'Tis all alike—his comic stuff I mean—
 I hate all humour—it gives me the spleen;
 So damn 'em both, with all my heart, unsight, unseen*.
 But shou'd you ruin him, still I'm undone—
 I've try'd all ways to bring my Phoenix on—

[*Showing his Play again.*]

Flatter I can with any of their tribe—
 Can cut and slash—indeed I cannot bribe;
 What must I do then?—beg you to subscribe.
 Be kind, ye boxes, galleries, and pit—
 'Tis but a crown a-piece for all this wit;
 All Sterling wit—to puff myself I hate—
 You'll ne'er supply your wants at such a rate!
 'Tis worth your money, I would scorn to wrong ye—
 'You smile consent—I'll send my hat among ye.

[*Going, he returns.*]

So much beyond all praise your bounties swell!
 Not my own tongue, my gra-ti-tude can tell—
 “ A little flattery sometimes does well.”

[*Staggers off.*]

* The Way to Keep Him, in three acts, was presented as the After-piece on the same night.



THE DESERT ISLAND.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Scene represents a Vale in the Desert Island, surrounded by Rocks, Caverns, Grottos, Flowering Shrubs, Exotic Trees, and Plants growing wild. On one side is a Cavern in a Rock; over the entrance of which appears, in large Characters, an unfinished Inscription. Constantia is discovered at Work at the Inscription, in a romantic Habit of Skins, Leaves, and Flowers; in her Hand she holds a broken Sword, and stands in act to finish the imperfect Inscription.*

After a short pause, she begins.

REST, rest my arm—ye weary sinews, rest—
Awhile forget your office—On this rock
Here sit thee down, and think thyself to stone.

[Sits down.]

—Would Heav'n I could!—*(Rises.)* Ye shrubs,
ye nameless plants,
That wildly gadding 'midst the rifted rocks

Wreathe your fantastic shoots, ye darksome trees,
That spread yon verdant arch above my head,
Shadowing this solemn scene, ye moss-grown caves,
Romantic grottos,—all ye objects drear ;—
Tell me, in pity tell me, have you seen,
Thro' the long series of revolving time,
In which you have inclos'd this lonely mansion,
Say, have ye seen another wretch like me ?
No, never!—You, in tend'rest sympathy,
Have join'd my plaints—you, at the midnight hour,
When with uprooted hair I've strew'd the earth,
And call'd my husband gone ; have call'd in vain
Perfidious Ferdinand!—you, at that hour,
Have waken'd echo in each vocal cell,
Till ev'ry grove, and ev'ry green hill round,
Mourn'd to my griefs responsive—Well you know
The story of my woes—Ev'n yonder marble
Relenting feels the touch ; receives each trace
That forms the melancholy tale—Tho' rude,
And inexpert my hand ;—though all uncouth
The instrument—yet there behold my work
Well nigh complete—Let me about it straight.

[She advances towards the rock.]

Ye deep engraven letters, there remain ;
And if, in future time, resistless fate
Shall throw some Briton on this dismal shore ;
Then speak aloud ;—to his astonish'd sense
Relate my sad, my memorable case—
Alarm his soul, call out—

STOP TRAVELLER.
 HERE
 CONSTANTIA,
 WITH HER LITTLE INFANT,
 SYLVIA,
 WAS DESERTED BY HER HUSBAND,
 THE PERFIDIOUS
 FERDINAND;
 WHO, PRETENDING TO LAND HER
 FOR REFRESHMENT,
 FROM THE DANGERS OF A STORMY SEA,
 BARBAROUSLY LEFT HER
 ON THIS UNHOSPITABLE ISLAND,
 WHERE SHE ENDED HER DETRORABLE LIFE.
 FRIEND!

WHOE'ER THOU ART,
 PITY MY WRONGS;
 BUT AGAINST MY HUSBAND
 (FOR LOVE LIKE MINE CANNOT FORGET
 WHERE ONCE WITH DELIGHT IT FIXED)
 I CHARGE YOU NEVER MEDITATE R——

Revenge!—the word Revenge is wanting still.
 Ye holy pow'rs; if with one pitying look
 You'll deign to view me, grant my earnest pray'r!
 Let me but finish this my sad inscription;
 Then let this busy, this afflicted heart,
 Be still at once, and beat my breast no more.

[She goes on with her work.]

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. My dearest mother—oh! quite out of breath!
 Const. What is the matter, child?

Syl. My flutt'ring heart
Beats wild with joy—Oh! such an incident!—

Const. What incident, my sweet?

Syl. My little fawn,
My dear, my loveliest fawn—for many days
Whose loss I've mourn'd; for whose dear sake I've
left

No corner of the isle unsearch'd:—this moment
O'er the dew-spangled lawn, with printless feet,
Came bounding to me; playful frisk'd about
With inexpressive airs of glad surprise,
With eager signs of transport—Big round tears
Stood trembling in his eye, and seem'd to speak
His fond regret still mingling with his joy.

Const. And is it that, my love, delights thee so?—

Syl. And can you wonder, ma'am:—yes, that de-
lights me,

Transports me, charms me;—he's my darling care,
My dear companion, my sweet little friend,
That loves me, gambols round me, watches still
With anxious tenderness my ev'ry motion,
Pants on my bosom, leaps into my arms,
And wanders o'er me with a thousand kisses.
Before this time he never once stray'd from me;
—I thought I lost him,—but he's found again!
And can you wonder I'm transported thus?

Const. Oh! happy state of innocence!—how sweet
Thy joys, simplicity e'er yet the mind
With artificial passions learns to glow;
Ere taste has ta'en our senses to her school,
Has given each well-bred appetite her laws,

Taught us to feel imaginary bliss,
Or else expire in elegance of pain.

Syl. Nay, now, again, you're growing grave—'Tis
you

Give laws to appetite ;—forbid each sense
To minister delight ; your eyes are dimm'd
With constant tears ; the roses on your cheek
Fade like yon vi'lets, when excessive dews
Have bent their drooping melancholy heads :
Soon they repair their graces ; soon recal
Their aromatic lives, and smiling yield
To sighing Zephyr all their balmy sweets.
To grief you're still a prey ; still wan despair
Sits with'ring at your heart, and ev'ry feature
Has your directions to be fix'd in woe.

Nay, prithee dry those tears—you make me sad—
—Will you, at length, forget your cares ?——

Const. Forget !——

Oh ! sweet oblivion, thy all-healing balm
To wretches you refuse ?—Can I forget
Perfidious Ferdinand ?—His tyrant form
Is ever present—The deluding looks,
Endearing accents, and the soft regards
With which he led me to yon moss-clad cave,
There to repose awhile—Oh ! cruel man !
And you, ye conscious wilds, I call you false !
Accomplices in guilt !—The Zephyrs bland
That pant upon each leaf ;—the melody
That warbles thro' your groves ; the falling fountains
That at each deep'ning cadence lull the mind,
Were all suborn'd against me ; all conspir'd

To wrap me in the silken folds of sleep.
 Sudden I wake—Where, where is Ferdinand?
 I rave, I shriek—no Ferdinand replies;—
 Frantic I rove thro' all your winding glades—
 I seek the shore;—no Ferdinand appears—
 I climb yon craggy steeps—I see the ship
 Unfurling all her sails—I call aloud,
 I stamp, cry out;—deaf as the roaring sea
 He catches ev'ry gale that blows from heav'n,
 And cleaves his liquid way.—

Syl. Why will you thus
 Recal your past afflictions?—

Const. Ah! what then,
 Thou wretched Constance; what were then thy feelings?

I rend my tresses—beat my breast in vain,
 In vain stretch out these ineffectual arms;
 Pierce with my frantic cries the wounded air,
 Dash my bare bosom on the flinty rock:
 Then rise again, and strain my aching sight,
 To see the ship still less'ning to my view,
 And take the last, last glimpse, as far, far off
 In the horizon's verge she lessens still,
 Grows a dim speck, and mixes with the clouds
 Just vanishing—just lost—ah! seen no more.

Syl. I prithee don't talk so—my heart dies in me—
 Why won't you strive a little to forget
 This melancholy theme?—The twilight grey
 Of morn but faintly streaks the east; the stars
 Still glimmer thro' the whit'ning air; the groves
 Are mute; yon all-devouring deep lies hush'd—

The tuneful birds, and the whole brute creation
Still sink, in soft oblivion's slumber wrapp'd,
Forgetful of their cares ;—all—all but you
Know some repose.—You pass the dreary night
In tears, and ceaseless grief ? then rising wild
Anticipate the dawn, and here resume
Your doleful task, or else ascend the height
Of yonder promontory ; there forlorn
You sit, and hear the brawling waves beneath
Lash the resounding shore—your brimful eye
Still fix'd on that sad quarter of the heav'ns
Where my hard father disappear'd.

Const. Yes, there

My melancholy loves to dwell ; there loves
To sit, and pine over its hoard of grief :
To roll these eyes o'er all the sullen main,
In hopes some sail may this way shape its course,
With the glad tidings of the human race !
Could I behold that dear, that wished-for-sight ;
Could I but see some vestiges of man,
Some mark of social life, ev'n tho' the ship
Should shun this isle, and court propitious gales
Beneath some happier clime ; yet still the view
Would cheer my soul, and my heart bound with joy
At that faint prospect of my fellow-creatures.
But not for me such transport !—not for me—
Dear native land, I now no more must see thee ;
Condemn'd in ever-during solitude to mourn,
From thy sweet joys, society, debarr'd !

Syl. But to your happiness what's wanting here ?
Full many a time I've heard you praise the arts,

The polish'd manners, and gay scenes of bliss
 Which Europe yields—yet ever and anon
 I from your own discourse can gather too,
 That happiness is all unknown to Europe;
 That envy there can dwell, and discontent:
 The smile, that wakens at another's woe;
 The heart, that sickens at another's praise;
 The tongue, that carries the malignant tale;
 The little spirit, that subverts a friend;
 Fraud, perfidy, ingratitude, and murder.
 Now sure, with reason, I prefer these scenes
 Of innocence, tranquillity, and joy!

Const. Alas! my child, 'tis easy to forego
 Untasted sweets, pleasures you never knew.

Syl. Are we not here what you yourself have told me
 In Europe sovereigns are?—Here we have fix'd
 Our little sylvan reign.—The guiltless race
 Of animals, that roam the lawns and woods,
 Are tractable and willing subjects;—pay
 Passive obedience to us—and yon sea
 Becomes our tributary; hither rolls
 In each hoarse-murm'ring tide his various stores
 Of daintiest shell-fish—The unbidden earth,
 Of human toil all ignorant, pours forth
 Whatever to the eye, or taste, can prove
 Rare, exquisite, and good—At once the spring
 Calls forth its green delights, and summer's blush
 Glows on each purple branch. The seasons here
 On the same tree, with glad surprize,
 Behold each other's gifts arise:
 Spontaneous fruits around us grow,
 For ever here the Zephyrs blow:

Shrubs ever flow'ring,
 Shades embow'ring;
 Heav'nly spots,
 Cooling grotts,
 Verdant mountains,
 Falling fountains;
 Pure limpid rills,
 Adown the hills,
 That wind their way,

And o'er the meadows play,
 Enamour'd of th' enchanted ground.

Const. What is this waste of beauty, all these charms
 Of cold, inanimate, unconscious nature,
 Without the social sense?

Syl. Those beauteous tracts,
 Which you so much regret, are full of men;
 And men you know, are animals of prey:
 I'm sure that you yourself have told me so
 A thousand times.——

Const. And if I have, my child,
 I told a dismal truth.—Oh! they are false,
 Inexorable, cruel, fell deceivers;
 Their unrelenting hearts no harbour know
 For honour, truth, humanity, or love.

Syl. Well then, in this lone isle, this dear retreat,
 From them, at least, we're free.—

Const. Poor innocent!
 I can't but grieve for her— [Bursts into tears.

Syl. Why fall afresh
 Those drops of sorrow?—pray you, now give o'er.

Const. My heart will break—I do not grieve, my child——

I can't conceal my tears—they will have way —

Syl. Nay, if you love me, sure you will not thus
Make my heart ache within me!—

Const. No, my sweet—

I will not weep—all will be well, my love—

Oh! misery!—I can't,—I can't contain—

The black ingratitude!—

[Weeps.]

Syl. Say, is there aught

Sylvia can do, that may afford you comfort?

If there is, tell me—Shall I fetch my fawn?

Dry up your tears, and he is yours this moment.

Const. No, Sylvia, no!—

Syl. He must, he shall be yours.

Refuse me not. I'll run and bring him to you. [Exit.]

CONSTANTIA alone.

Alas! I fear my brain will turn—The sun
Full sixteen times has made his annual course
Since here I've dragg'd a miserable being,
The victim of despair; which long e'er now,
To frenzy kindling, must have forc'd me dash
My brain in madness on yon flinty rocks,
And end my pangs at once: if the keen instinct
Of strong maternal love had not restrain'd
My wild disorder'd soul, and bade me live
To watch her tender infancy; to rear
Her blooming years; with fond delighted care
To tend each blossom of her growing mind,
And see light gradual dawning on her soul.

And yet to see her thus,—to see her here,
Cut off from ev'ry social bliss ; condemn'd,
Like some fair flow'r that in a desert blows,
To breathe its sweets into the passing wind,
And waste its bloom, all unperceiv'd, away!
It is enough to break a mother's heart.
Let me not think on't—let me shun that thought.
[Sits down and sings.]

I.

What tho' his guilt my heart hath torn,
Yet lovely is his mien ;
His eyes mild op'ning as the morn,
Round him each grace is seen.
But oh ! ye nymphs, your loves ne'er let him win,
For oh ! deceit and falsehood dwell within.

II.

From his red lips his accents stole,
Soft as kind vernal snows ;
Melting they came, and in the soul
Desire and joy arose.
But oh ! ye nymphs, ne'er listen to his art,
For oh ! base falsehood rankles in his heart.

III.

He left me in this lonely state !
He fled, and left me here,
Another Ariadne's fate,
To mourn the live-long year.
He fled—but oh ! what pains the heart must prove,
When we reveal the crimes of him we love !

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. I cannot bring him now—in yonder stream
That thro' its pebbled channel glides along
Soft-murm'ring to the sea, he stands to cool
His beauteous form in the pure limpid rill.

Const. To thee he causes joy—but joy to me,
There's nothing now can bring—Left by my husband!

By the false barb'rous man!—

Syl. And yet this man,
This false, deceitful man, you still regret.
I vow, I can't but think, 'midst all your grief,
All your reproaches, your complaints against him,
That still this false, this cruel fell deceiver,
Has found—I know not why—within your breast
Some tender advocate to plead his cause.

Const. No, Sylvia, no; my love is turn'd to hate!—

Syl. Then dry your sorrows, and this day begin
A happier train of years—and lo! the sun
Emerges from the sea—he lifts his orb
Above the purpled main, and streams abroad
His golden fluid o'er the world—the birds
Exulting wake their notes—all things rejoice,
And hills, and groves, and rocks, and vallies smile;
Let me intreat you then forget your cares,
And share the general bliss.——

[The sun is seen to rise at a distance, as it were out of the sea.]

Const. Once more all hail,
Thou radiant power, who in your bright career

Or rising or descending, hast beheld
My never-ceasing woe ;—again thou climb'st
In orient glory, and recall'st the cares
And toils of man and beast !—but oh ! in all
Your flaming course, your beams will never light
Upon a wretch so lost, so curst as I am.

Syl. And yet, my mother——

Const. Mine are pangs, my child,
Strokes of adversity, no time can cure,
No lenient arts can soften or assuage.
But I'll not grieve thee, Sylvia—I'll retire
To some sequester'd haunt—There, all forlorn,
I'll sit, and wear myself away in thought. [Exit.

SYLVIA alone.

Alas ! how obstinately bent on grief
Is her whole mind !—the votarist of care ?
In vain I try to soften her afflictions,
And with each art beguile her from her woe.
I chide, intreat, caress, yet all in vain.
And what to me seems strange, perverse, and won-
d'rous,

The more I strive, the more her sorrows swell :
Her tears the faster fall, fall down her cheek
In streams so copious, and such bitter anguish,
That I myself, at length, I know not how,
Catch the soft weakness, and o'erpow'r'd with grief,
Flow all-dissolving in unbidden tears.

Assist her, Heav'n.—Her heart will break at last—
I tremble at the thought—I'll follow straight
And still implore, beseech, try ev'ry way

To reconcile her to herself and me.
But see, look yonder ! what a sight is there !
What can it mean, that huge enormous mass
That moves upon the bosom of the deep !
—A floating mountain !—no—a mountain never
Could change its place—for such a monstrous bulk
How light it urges on its way—how quick,
How rapid in its course !—What can it be—
I'll to the shore, and from the pointed rock
That juts into the waves, at leisure view
This wond'rous sight, and what it is, explore.

THE END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

SCENE I.—*Another view of the Island, with an opening to the sea between several hills and rocks.*

Enter SYLVIA.

Sylvia.

STILL I behold it—still it glides along
 Thro' the tumultuous sea—and lo! before it
 The waves divide! and now they close again,
 Leaving a track of angry foam behind,
 It must be, sure, some monster of the deep;
 And, see!—upon its huge broad back it bears
 Expanded wings, that, spreading to the wind,
 Lie broad incumbent o'er the surge beneath—
 —Ah! save me, save me! what new forms appear!
 What shapes of unknown beings rise before me!
 From yon huge monster's side they issue forth,
 And bolt upon the shore!—Behold, they stop;
 And now with eager disconcerted pace
 Precipitate rush forward on the isle,—
 Now 'mongst the rocks they wind their silent way.
 Protect me, Heav'n! defend me! shield me!—ah!
 Hide me, ye woods, within your deep recess;
 Ne'er may these monsters penetrate your haunts,
 Ne'er trace my footsteps thro' your darksome ways.
 Behind the covert of this woodbine bow'r
 Oh! let me rest conceal'd! [*She retires.*]

Enter FERDINAND and HENRICO.

Hen. No trace appears,
No vestige here is seen of human kind.
'Tis drear, 'tis waste, and unfrequented all.
And hark!—what noise?—from yonder toiling deep
How dreadful sounds the pealing roar!—My friend,
My valued Ferdinand, 'twere best retire.
This cannot be the place.——

Fer. Oh! my Henrico,
This is the fatal shore. The well-known scene;
Yon bay, yon rocks, yon mountains, from whose brow
Th' imbow'ring forest overhangs the deep;
Each well-remember'd object strikes my view
Answers the image in my mind preserv'd,
Engraven there by love's recording hand,
And never, but with life, to fade from thence.

Hen. And yet thy love-enfeebled soul may form
Imaginary tokens of resemblance.
The soil unbeaten seems by mortal step.

Fer. My heart in ev'ry pulse confirms it to me.
This is the place, the dreary spot, where fate
Began to wave the tissue of my woes.
Oh! I was curst, abhorr'd of Heav'n, or else
I ne'er had trusted the contentious weaves,
But kept my store of happiness at home.

Hen. Repine not for an action that arose
From filial piety. A father's mandate
Requir'd obedience from you.

Fer. To his summons
I paid a glad attention. Yet, good Heav'n!

Why in that early period of my bliss
Should then his orders come, to dash my joys?
Oh! I was blest with all that rarest beauty,
With all that ev'ry Venus of the mind,
The tender heart, and the enliv'n'd wit,
Could pour delightful on the raptur'd sense
Of the young bridegroom; whose admiring eyes
Still hung enamour'd on her ev'ry charm,
And thence drank long inspiring draughts of love,
Unsated still, still kindling at the view.

Hen. Indeed, my Ferdinand, thy fate was hard!

Fer. Each soft desire, each joy refin'd was mine.
The hours soft glided by, and as they pass'd
Scatter'd new blessings from their balmy wings;
They saw our ever-new delight; they saw
A blooming offspring crown our mutual loves;
The mother's features, and her ev'ry grace
In this our daughter exquisitely trac'd.
But to be torn from that supreme of bliss!
My wife, Constantia,—and my beauteous babe,
Here to be left on this untravell'd isle,
To pine in bitterness of want! their bed
The cold bare earth, while the inclement winds
From yonder main came howling round their heads,
Until at length the friendly hand of death
In pity threw his shroud upon their woes.

Hen. Too sure, I fear, they're lost.

Fer. Perhaps, my friend,
Perhaps, when grasping in the pangs of death,
When ev'ry beauty faded from her cheek,
And her eye languish'd motionless and dim,

Perhaps ev'n then, in that sad dismal hour,
My name still hover'd on her quiv'ring lips,
And nought but death could tear me from her heart.

Hen. Her tend'rest thoughts, no doubt, were fix'd
on thee.

Fer. Her tend'rest thoughts? Oh! no: her utmost
rage.

Who knows, Henrico, but she deem'd me false;
Deem'd me a vile deserter from her arms?
She did, she must: each strong appearance join'd
To mark me guilty. Oh! that thought strikes deep
Its scorpion stings into my very heart.
Could she but think me so refin'd in guilt,
So exquisite a villain, as to cause
A moment's anguish in that tender breast,
Where all the loves, where all the virtues dwelt;
'Twere misery, 'twere torture in th' extreme!
And yet she thought me such; by Heav'n she did;
Accus'd me of the worst, the blackest treason,
Of treason to my love! Stung with th' idea
She roam'd this isle, and to these desert wilds
Pour'd forth her lamentable tale. Who knows
But on some craggy cliff whole nights she sat
Raving in madness to the moon's pale gleam;
Until at length all kindling into phrenzy,
Clasping her infant closer to her breast,
With desperation wild from off the rock
Headlong she plung'd into the roaring sea,
And her last accents murmur'd faithless—Ferdinand!

Hen. Distract not thus your soul with fancied woes.
She could not think thee faithless; thee, whose mind,
Whose ev'ry virtue, were so well approv'd.

Fer. Still will I hope she did not. Oh! she knew
I made that voyage in duty to a father.
Awhile we steer'd a happy course, until
Beneath the burning line, from whence the sun
In strait direction pours his ardent blaze
On ev'ry fever'd sense, a storm arose,
Sudden and wild; as if a war of nature
Were thund'ring o'er our heads. Full twenty days
It drove us headlong on the dashing surge
Far from our destin'd way, until at length
In evil hour we landed on this isle.

SYLVIA returns, and peeps from behind a hedge.

Syl. Methought I heard a sound, as if they both
Held mutual converse. Yonder, lo! they stand:
They do not follow me. What can they be?

Fer. There is the spot, just where yon aged tree
Imbrowns the plain beneath, on which the villains,
The unrelenting band of pirates, seiz'd me.
There I receiv'd my wound, and there I fought
Till my sword shiver'd in my hand. Worn out,
Oppress'd by numbers, pow'rless, and disarm'd,
They bore me headlong to the beach; in vain
Piercing the air with horrid cries; in vain
Back tow'rd the cave, where poor Constantia slept,
With her lov'd infant-daughter in her arms,
Straining my ardent eyes; my eyes alone!
For oh! their cruelty had bound my arms,
And tears and looks were all I then could use.

Syl. The voice but indistinctly strikes my ear.
Would they would turn this way.

Fer. Fetter'd, ty'd down,

They dragg'd me to the vessel. Bore me hence.
 In vain our ship pursu'd : in vain gave chase.
 Form'd with detested skill, the guilty bark
 In which they plung'd me, gliding o'er the main,
 Outstripp'd their tardy course. We steer'd away
 Far to the regions of accursed bondage.
 Far from Constantia, far from ev'ry joy
 A doating husband, and delighted father
 Feels in mix'd rapture with his wife and child.
 Oh! I could pour my complaints—but I'll not wound
 Thy ear, my friend, with further lamentation.

Hen. Would Heaven I could remove the cause.

Fer. Alas!

That cannot be. Thou can'st not bid return
 The irrevocable flight of time; recal
 The moments of our young delight; annul
 And render void, what once the hand of fate
 Hath from its stores of woe pour'd down upon me.

Syl. (Half concealed.) Why will they stand with
 looks averted thus?

I long to see their countenance and mien.

Fer. But yet, thou best of friends, yet grant me
 this.

Assist my search; Oh! let me roam around
 This fatal shore! the isle's circumference
 Circles a scanty space. We cannot lose
 Each other here. Do thou pursue that path
 That leads due east: this way I'll bend my course.

Hen. By Heav'n there is no task of hardihood,
 Of toil, or danger, but I'll try for thee;
 For thee, my friend: to thee I owe my life,

And that more precious boon, my liberty :
Thou hast releas'd me from the galling chain,
From slav'ry's bitter pressure. 'Twas thy skill
That form'd the plan of freedom, seiz'd the vessel,
And made your friends the partners of your flight.
For thee I'll roam around : but oh ! I fear
Our search will prove in vain.

Fer. Too sure it will.

And yet it is the doom of love like mine
To dwell for ever on the sad idea
Of the dear object lost ; to visit oft
(A lonely pilgrim) ev'ry well-known scene,
Each haunted glade, where the lov'd object stray'd ;
To call each circumstance of pass'd delight
Back to the soul ; in fond excursions seek
Her dear lamented form. Then, oh ! my friend,
Then let me taste that sad, that pensive comfort.
Range thro' these wilds ; ascend each craggy steep,
Try in each grotto, in each gloomy cave,
If haply there remain some vestige of Constantia.

[*Exit.*

Hen. On yonder beach we'll meet again. Farewel !

Syl. Conceal thee, Sylvia. Ah !—it comes this way !

Then let me seek the covert of the woods,
Where nods the brownest horror ; there lie safe,
From the unusual sight of these strange beings. [*Exit.*

HENRICO, *solus.*

How cruel is my friend's condition ! Doom'd
For ever to regret, yet never find

The object of his soul. His early love
He lavish'd all on her ; with her it goes
To the dark grave, and leaves him hapless here
To die a lingering death. Yet still I'll try,
By ev'ry office friendship can perform,
To heal the wound that preys upon his life. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *Another Part of the Island.*

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. What have my eyes beheld? My flutt'ring
heart
Beats quick in strange emotions. From yon grove
Of tufted trees I saw this nameless being
Walk o'er the russet heath. Its face appear'd
Confess'd to view. It cannot be a man.
No lines of cruelty deform'd his visage.
Were it a man, his untam'd, savage soul,
Would strongly speak in each distorted feature.
This was all pleasing, amiable, and mild :
A gentle sorrow, bright'ning into smiles,
Such as bespoke a calm, yet feeling spirit,
Sat on its peaceful brow, and o'er it threw
A gentle gleam of sweetness and of pain.
It cannot be a woman neither : no ;
The dress accords not with that mode which oft
My mother hath describ'd. Whate'er it be,
Attraction dwells about it ; winning smiles ;
Assuasive airs of tenderness and joy,
I'll seek my mother ; she perhaps may know
These forms, to me unusual. By this row
Of darksome pines, my steps, all unperceiv'd,

May gain the place where with assiduous hand
 She works, and teaches the rude rocks to tell
 Her mournful elegy. What mean my feet?
 Why stand they thus forgetful of their office?
 Why heaves th' involuntary sigh? And why
 Thus in quick pulses beats my heart? My eyes
 A misty dimness covers: in my ears
 Strange murmurs sound; my very breath is lost.
 What can it be?—I know thee, Fear!—'tis thou
 That causest this! And yet it can't be fear.
 Fear cannot thrill with pleasure thro' the veins;
 Knows not this dubious joy, these grateful trem-
 blings.

I cannot guess what these emotions mean,
 Nor what this busy thing my heart would want!
 Let me seek shelter in my mother's arms. [Exit.

SCENE III. *Changes to the first View of the Island,
 where CONSTANTIA's Inscription is seen.*

Enter FERDINAND.

Fer. No; never more shall these fond eyes behold
 her.

Lost, lost, my poor Constantia lost! In vain
 I search these gloomy woods; in vain call out
 Her honour'd name to ev'ry hill and dale.
 My eyes are false, or on the craggy base
 Of yonder rock some instrument appears,
 The mark of human kind. A broken sword!
 Oh! all ye Heav'nly pow'rs!—the very same!
 This once was mine! Unfaithful to its trust,
 It fail'd me at my utmost need. I see

The well-known characters; the very words
 That form'd its motto. 'Tis, it is the same.
 Oh! were Constantia found! What do I see?
 All o'er with hair the flinty rock bestrew'd!
 These were her decent tresses; these in anguish
 She tore relentless from her beauteous head,
 Up by the roots she tore, and scatter'd wild
 To all the passing winds. She still may live!
 Constantia!—ha!—what mystic characters
 Are hewn into the rock?—My name appears!

[He reads.]

STOP TRAVELLER,

HERE

CONSTANTIA,

WITH HER LITTLE INFANT,

SYLVIA,

WAS DESERTED BY HER HUSBAND,

THE PERPIDIOUS

FERDINAND;

WHO, PRETENDING TO LAND HER

FOR REFRESHMENT,

FROM THE DANGERS OF A STORMY SEA,

BARBAROUSLY LEFT HER

ON THIS UNHOSPITABLE ISLAND,

WHERE SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.

Support me, Heav'n! Ah! no; withhold your aid,
 Ye unrelenting pow'rs, and let me thus,
 Each vital spark subsiding, thus expire.

[Leans against the rock.]

Enter HENRICO.

Hen. What, ho! my Ferdinand! This way the sound

Struck on my list'ning ear. What means my friend
Thus growing to the rock, transform'd to stone,
A breathing statue, 'midst these shapeless piles?

Fer. Behold! read there!

Hen. Letters engrav'd!

[He reads part to himself, and then repeats aloud.]

SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.

Alas! my friend—

*(They gaze speechless at each other for some time,
then Ferdinand falls)*

The storm of grief o'erpow'rs his feeble spirits.
Now rouse thy strength, my Ferdinand, and bear
This load of sorrow like a man.

Fer. I do;

Thou see'st I do. I do not weep, my friend.
These eyes are dry; their very source is dry.
I am her cruel husband to the last.

Hen. Oh! thou wert ever kind and tender to her.

Fer. Tender and kind!—look there!—there stands
the black,

The horrid roll of guilt denounc'd against me.

Lo! the dread characters! let me peruse

The whole sad record; of this bitter woe

Still deeper drink, and gorge me with affliction.

[He reads.]

FRIEND!

WHOE'ER THOU ART,

PITY MY WRONGS!

BUT AGAINST MY HUSBAND
(FOR LOVE LIKE MINE CANNOT FORGET
WHERE ONCE WITH DELIGHT IT FIXED)

I CHARGE YOU NEVER MEDITATE R——

Revenge, she meant to say : the word's begun !
But death untimely stopt her hand. Oh ! misery !
She thought me false, and yet could love me still.
The wound now pierces deeper. Had she loath'd me,
Abhorr'd me, curs'd me, 'twere not half the torture
This angel goodness causes. And to lose her !
To lose a mind like hers, that thus could pour
Such unexampled tenderness and love,
Amidst the keenest anguish ! On the earth
Measure thy length, thou wretch accurst ! there lie,
For ever lie, and to these woods and wilds
Howl out thy griefs in madness and despair.

Hen. I feel, I feel thy sorrows. Oh ! my friend,
Cruel event ! your tears, alas ! are just.
Those gushing sorrows may assuage your grief,
This storm of rage attemp'ring into peace.

Fer. Who talks of peace ! Let phrenzy seize my
brain.

Come, moon-struck madness, with thy glaring eye
And clanking chain ; come, shoot thy kindling fires
Into my inmost soul ; blast ev'ry pow'r ;
Raze each idea out ! tear up at once
The seat of memory—no—leave me that ;
Still leave me memory, to picture forth
Constantia's lovely form, that I may sit,
With unclad sides, upon some blasted heath,
And gloat upon her image ; see her still,

See her whole days with fancy's gushing eye,
And gaze on that alone.

Hen. Arise, my friend,
And quit this fatal shore.

Fer. And quit this shore!
But whither turn? Ah! whither shall I go?
Where shelter me from misery?—This isle
Shall be my journey's bound.

Hen. What can'st thou mean?

Fer. Never again to draw the vital air
But where my love expir'd! To feed my soul
With those sad objects, this sepulchral tale,
Ev'n to the height of yet un-heard-of anguish:
To print my pious kisses on the rock;
To bathe the ground, which her dear footsteps press'd,
With the incessant tears of burning anguish;
To make these wilds all vocal with her name,
'Till this cold lifeless tongue shall move no more.

Hen. By Heav'n you must not stay.

Fer. Farewell! farewell!

Consult thy happiness!—for ever here
By fate I'm doom'd to stay. Alas, Constantia!
To perish with thy infant here! No friend
To close thy ghastly orbs! Thy pale remains
On the bare earth expos'd, without the tribute
Of a fond husband's tears o'er thy dead corse;
Without the last sad obsequies! Yet here
I still will raise an empty sepulchre.
There shall no cold, unconscious marble form,
In mockery of imitated woe,
Bend o'er the fancy'd urn, myself will be

The sad, the pensive, monumental figure,
Distilling real anguish o'er the tomb;
Till wasting by degrees I moulder down,
And sink to silent dust.

Hen. What man could do
Already you've perform'd——

Fer. Prithee no more.
I will about it straight. This place affords
Materials for the work. Thither I'll bring
Whate'er can deck the scene. Constantia, yes:
I will appease thy discontented shade.
Then follow thee to yonder realms of bliss. [*Exit.*]

Hen. His vehemence of grief bears down his reason.
He must not linger here. His stay were fatal.
Force will be necessary; to our vessel
I'll hasten back, and call some trusty friends
To bear him from this melancholy shore.

THE END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

The Scene continues.

Enter SYLVIA.

Sylvia.

THRO' the thick-woven shade of arching bow'rs,
Through walks, where never sun-beam pierc'd, at
length

I've gain'd this deep-encircled vale. Ah, me!
I feel strange tremors still. She is not here!
Constantia!—no reply: her mournful task
Waits for her ling'ring hand.—What noise is that?
I heard some steps advancing. 'Tis my fawn
That rustles thro' the forest glade: he stops
And looks, then runs, and stops again, to take
A fearful gaze! He too perhaps has seen
These unknown beings. Yonder lo! he stands
In mute expressive wonder. Heav'n protect me!
Thro' this close path, that gradual winding up
Leads on to plains, to woods, to verdant lawns,
Embosom'd in the rock, I'll journey up.
The day now glows intense, but by the rills,
That thro' embow'ring groves come purling down,
I oft can lay me, and enjoy each breeze
That plays amid those craggy scenes. A noise
From yonder interwoven branches. Ha!
Ye guardian angels, save me!—see, see there!
It comes again!

Enter HENRICO.

Hen. What beauteous form in these forlorn abodes
Attracts my wond'ring eyes!

Syl. Ye heav'nly powers! [*Retiring from him.*

Hen. It swims before my sight. Whate'er thou art,
Virgin or goddess—Oh! a goddess sure!
Thou goddess of these mansions! for thy looks
Beam heav'nly radiance, with propitious ears
Accept my supplication.

Syl. Ha! it speaks!
It speaks! what dost thou mean?

Hen. Oh! say what place,
What clime is this? And what art thou that thus
Adorn'st this lone retreat?

Syl. Will you first
Promise to come no nearer?

Hen. With devotion
As true as ever pilgrim offer'd up
In holy fervor to his saint, I promise.

Syl. How gentle its demeanor! Tell me now
Who and what art thou?

Hen. I am born to misery;
A man, whom fate——

Syl. A man!—art thou a man?
Defend me Heav'n! ye guardian pow'rs protect me?
[*Running away.*

Hen. Nay, fly me not: a sudden impulse here
Bids me pursue. Forgive, thou unknown fair,
That with soft violence I thus presume
To force thee measure back thy steps again.

[*He brings her back.*

Syl. Force me not thus, inhuman, barb'rous man !
What have I said—Oh ! worthy gen'rous man !
Thus on my knees I beg ; have mercy on me.
I never did you harm ; indeed I did not.

Hen. Arise, (*raises her*) thou lovely tenant of
these woods,

And let me thus, thus as befits the man
Whose mind runs o'er with rapture and surprize,
Whose heart throbs wild with mingled doubt and joy ;
Thus let me worship this celestial form,
This heav'nly brightness, to my wond'ring eyes
That sheds such influence, as when an angel
Breaks thro' a flood of glory to the sight
Of some expiring saint, and cheers his soul
With visions of disclosing heav'n.

Syl. He kneels !

He kneels to me ! How mild his every look !
How soft each word !—Can man be tender thus,
Of gentle mien, compassionate and kind ?

Hen. In methousee'st a wretch, whose heart is prone
To melt at each idea beauty prints
On his delighted sense ; and sure such beauty,
Touch'd by the hand of harmony, adorn'd
With inexpressive graces, well may claim
My lowliest adoration and my love.

Syl. This language all is new ; but still it has
I know not what of charming in't, that gains
Upon the list'ning ear. If this be falsehood,
Then falshood can assume a pleasing look.

Hen. Oh ! if thou art as gracious as thou'rt fair,

Say have you seen Constantia? when and where,
And how did she expire?

Syl. Constantia lives.

Why did'st thou say expire? My mother lives,
Lives in these blest abodes.

Hen. Oh! gentle Sylvia,
So I will call thee, daughter of Constantia,
Oh! fly and find her out. Mean time I'll seek
Th' afflicted Ferdinand.—

Syl. What dost thou say!
Can he, can Ferdinand be here? That false,
Perfiduous, barb'rous man; can he be here?

Hen. He is, my fair; not barbarous nor false.
Fortune that made him wretched, could no more.
Anon you'll know the whole; to waste a moment
In conference now, and longer to suspend
The meeting of this pair, who now in agony
Bemoan their lot, were barbarous indeed.

Syl. But may I trust him? Won't he do her harm?

Hen. He won't, my beauteous fair.

Syl. Is he like you?

Hen. His goodness far transcends mine.

Syl. Then I think
I'll venture to comply. Let's go together.
Hen. Oh! I could tend thy steps for ever; hear
Soft accents warbling from thy vermeil lip;
Watch thy mild-glancing eye; behold how grace,
Whate'er you do, which ever way you bend,
Guides each harmonious movement; but this hour
Is friendship's due. Then let us instant fly
Thro' diff'rent windings; thou to seek Constantia,

And I to find her husband : hap'ly so,
 Their meeting will be soon. Meantime farewell !
 I'll bring him to this very spot. Adieu !
 For a short interval adieu, my love !

Syl. Farewell !—Another word : pray what's your
 name ?

Hen. Fair excellence, Henrico I am call'd.

Syl. Pray do not tarry long, Henrico.

Hen. Why

That pleasing charge, my sweet ?

Syl. I cannot tell ;

But as you're leaving me, each step you move
 My spirits sink ; a melancholy gloom
 Darkens the scene around, and I, methinks,
 Helpless in solitude, am left again,
 To wander all alone a dreary way.

Hen. Thou angel sweetness ! I'll return anon ;
 Yes, I will come, and at that lovely shrine
 Pour out my adoration and my vows.
 Yes, I will come to part from thee no more.
 A moment now farewell !

[*Exit.*

SYLVIA. (*alone.*)

Farewell ! be sure you keep your word. He's gone,
 And yet is with me still. Absent I hear
 And see him in his absence : still his looks
 Beam with mild dignity, and still his voice
 Sounds in my ear delightful. What it means,
 This new-born sense, this wonderful emotion,
 Unfelt till now, and mix'd of pain and joy,
 I cannot guess. How my heart flutters in me !

I'll not perplex myself with vain conjecture.
 What'er the cause, th' effect, I feel, is pleasing.

[*CONSTANTIA is heard singing within.*]

Ah me! what noise is that? My mother's voice!
 Again she pours her melancholy forth,
 As sweetly plaintive, as when Philomel,
 Beneath some poplar shade, bemoans her young,
 And sitting pensive on the lonely bough,
 Her eye with sorrow dimn'd, she tunes her dirge,
 Warbling the night away; while all around
 The vocal woodland, and each hill and dale,
 Ring with her griefs harmonious. Hark! that way
 It sounds. All gracious pow'rs direct me to her.
 [*Exit.*]

Enter CONSTANTIA.

Const. From walk to walk, from glade to glade, o'er all
 The sea-girt isle, o'er ev'ry mountain's top,
 I roam from place to place; but, oh! no place
 Affords relief to me. The sun now leads
 The sultry hours, and from his burning ray
 Each living thing retires; yet I endure
 His fiercest rage. The fever in my mind
 Heeds not external circumstance: each day
 Sees this sad heart fresh bleeding as at first.
 Delay not thus, ye cruel fates, but come
 And wrap me in eternal rest. Till then
 Let me pursue my melancholy task.

[*Works at the inscription.*]

Enter FERDINAND.

Fer. Away with their ill-tim'd officious care,

I'll none of it. 'Tis cruelty, not friendship:
'Tis misery protracted; 'tis with art,
Inhuman art to lengthen out the life
Of him who groans in torment. No; they never shall
Compel me back to a base world again!
I've liv'd enough: my course is ended here;
For here Constantia lies. Ye heav'nly pow'rs!
What-means upon yon consecrated ground
That visionary form, with lifted arm
And gleaming steel, that seems in act to carve
The rugged stone?

Const. What is't I hear! a voice!
A groan from whence—Ha! [*Seeing Ferdinand*

Fer. 'Tis Constantia's form!
Her discontented shade, that hovers still
About this place.

Const. Delusive air-drawn shape
Of that perfidious—ah! [*She faints away.*

Fer. Leave me not thus.
Oh! ever gracious, ever gentle, say—
'Tis gone, in sullen silence gone!

Enter HENRICO.

Hen. Quick let me find him, to his raptur'd ear
Give the delightful tidings—Ha!

Fer. And thus
I sink at once and follow my belov'd.
[*Falls into Henrico's arms.*

Hen. He faints, he faints: the chilling dews of
death

Distil thro' every pore. My Ferdinand,

Awake, arise, and hear the joyful sounds
Of happiness restor'd. His eyes unfold
To seek fair day-light, and now close again
As if they sicken'd at the view.

Fer. Forbear,
And let me die!

Hen. Constantia lives! she lives
Once more to fold thee in her warm embrace.

Fer. I saw her fleeting form: sullen and pale
It vanish'd from my sight.

Const. Alas! no help!
Oh! death where art thou? [*Coming to herself.*]

Hen. Whence that voice?
Constantia there! behold! she too entranc'd
Lies stretch'd upon the ground.

Fer. Where is Constantia?
Oh! let me catch the fleeting shade. 'Tis she!
It is my wife! it is Constantia still!
Oh! extasy of bliss! She still survives!

Const. 'Tis mere illusion all; the false creation
Of some deceitful dream.

Fer. 'Tis real all.
Again I fold her thus! the known embrace
Hath thrill'd its wonted transport to my heart.
My life, my soul, thy Ferdinand is come!

Const. And com'st thou then, inhuman as thou art,
Com'st thou again to wreak thy malice on me?

Fer. By heav'n I ne'er was false. Dash not my joys
With thy unkind suspicion of my love,
While thus transported far above the lot
Of human bliss, I press my lips to thine,

Inhaling balmy sweets, and all my soul
Runs o'er with bliss, with wonder and delight.

Const. Did'st thou not meanly leave me here a
prey——

Fer. And can Constantia deem me then so base?
Can she believe me such a vile betrayer?
Can'st thou?—

Const. On this unhospitable shore
Left as I was——

Fer. Oh, misery! thou we'rt!
While I was dragg'd by an insidious band
Of pirates, savage blood-hounds! into bondage.
But witness heav'n, witness ye midnight hours
That heard my ceaseless groans, how dear thy image
Grew to my very heart!

Const. And hast thou then
Been doom'd to slavery?

Fer. I have.

Const. And groan'd
This long, long time beneath oppression's rod?

Fer. E'er since these eyes have gaz'd, delighted, on
thee,

The bitter draught of misery was mine.

Const. And wert thou true indeed?

Fer. By Heav'n I was.

Const. And have I then accus'd thee? Have I
pour'd

A thousand strong complaints against thee? Call'd
High-judging Heav'n to witness to my wrongs?
Told all these wilds, these rocks, these wood-
crown'd hills
Of injur'd truth and violated love?

Falsely I talk'd, unjustly I complain'd
 Of injur'd truth and violated love ;
 My Ferdinand was true ! again 'tis giv'n
 With his lov'd form to glad these eyes, to rush
 With eager transport to his fond embrace,
 To cling around his neck, and growing to him,
 Pour the warm tears of rapture and of love.

[*They embrace.*]

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. I heard my mother's voice. What do I see ?
 In a man's arms ! embracing and embrac'd !

Fer. Is that my Sylvia ? Oh ! it must be so.
 My child, my child survives ! survives to take
 A raptur'd father's blessing, and o'erpay
 His suff'rings past by this excess of joy,
 This mingled interview of tears and kisses.

Syl. How gentle his deportment too ! I feel
 A soft attraction bind my soul to his.
 Are these the men whom thou so oft describ'd
 Inexorable, cruel, fell deceivers ?

Const. I was deceiv'd myself, my child ; for truth,
 Honour, and love, and constancy, are theirs.
 I now have proof of unexampled goodness.

Syl. Indeed I strongly thought you wrong'd 'em
 much,
 When first Hen met my wond'ring eyes.

Fer. Henrico is my friend, my best Constantia,
 And thou hereafter shalt know all his virtues.

Syl. And shall I know him too ?

Hen. Thou shalt ; and I
 Will live thy slave, if thou wilt deign to love me.

Syl. Love you! I know not what you mean by love;
But if with pleasure to behold thee; if
To hang upon thy words; to mourn thy absence;
With joy to meet again, and feel my heart
Form new desires, and wish it knows not what;
If that be love, I do already love you.

Hen. Then am I bless'd indeed! Yes, thou shalt be—
My friend will smile consent—yes, thou, fair nymph,
Shalt be my bride.

Syl. Your bride! what's that?

Hen. My wife.

Syl. No, Sir, not that. I crave your pardon there.
To be left helpless on a desert island!

Const. Thy father did not leave me, Sylvia; no;
He could not prove deliberately false.
His heart was unsusceptable of fraud.
Anon you'll know it all.

Hen. Mean time, my fair,
Banish thy fears; and let me with this kiss,
On the white softness of this lovely hand,
For ever dedicate my heart.

Syl. Oh, Heav'ns!
What must I do, Mamma!

Const. Requite his love
With fair return of thine.

Syl. Must I do so?
The task appears not undelightful. Yes,
To thee I can resign myself. But tell me,
Wilt thou ne'er leave me; Wilt thou ever here
Fix thy abode?

Hen. No; we'll convey thee hence,
To the soft influence of a milder clime:

There like a flow'r transplanted, thou shalt flourish
And ne'er regret this warmer southern sky,
But thrive and ripen, to the wond'ring world,
Unfolding all thy sweets to higher bloom.

Syl. What place is that? And whither will ye bear
me?

Fer. To thy dear native soil; to England, love.

Syl. To England!

Hen. Yes! the land of beauteous dames:
'Mongst whom thy matchless excellence shall shine
With undiminish'd radiance, and exert
Its gentle pow'r; by innocence endear'd,
By virtue heighten'd, and by modest truth
Attemper'd to such sweetness, that each fair,
With unrepining heart and glad consent,
Shall own thy rival claim; and ev'ry youth,
Touch'd by the graces of thy native beauty,
Shall join to make thy form the public care.

Syl. I cannot quit this island; cannot leave
These woods, these lawns, these hills and deep'ning
vales,

These streams oft-visited, each well-known haunt,
Where hand in hand with innocence I've stray'd,
And tasted joys serene as is the air
That pants upon yon trembling leaves.

Fer. Such joys
For thee shall blossom in thy native land,
And new delights arise. There cultur'd fields
Wave with the golden harvest; commerce pours
Each delicacy forth; there stately domes
Attract the wond'ring eye; there cities swarm
With busy throngs intense, and smiles around

A scene of active, cheerful, social life,
Thither I'll lead thee, sweet.

Syl. And yet my heart
Misgives me much. Does not contention there,
And civil discord, render life a scene
Of care, and toil, and struggle? Does not war
From foreign nations oft invade the land,
With all his train of misery and death?

Fer. Thy lovely fears are groundless. Ours, the land
Where inward peace diffuses smiles around,
And scatters wide her blessings: there a king,
(My friend comes later thence, and tells me all)
There reigns a happy, venerable king,
Dispensing justice and maintaining laws,
That bind alike his people and himself.
From that source liberty, and ev'ry claim
A free-born people boast, flow equal on,
And harmonize the state; while in the eve
And calm decline of life our monarch sees
A royal grandson still to higher lustre
Each day expanding; emulous to trace
His grandsire's steps, to copy out his actions;
And bid the ray of freedom onward stretch
To ages yet unborn.

Syl. And do the people
Know their own happiness?

Fer. They do, my sweet:
Pleas'd, they behold their native rights secur'd;
Their commerce guarded, and the useful arts,
That raise, that soften, and embellish life,
All to perfection rising. With a sense

Of their own blessing touch'd, with one consent
They pour their treasures and exhaust their blood
In their king's righteous cause. Fair Albion thus
Raises her envied head ; thus ev'ry threat
Of foreign force, each menace of invasion,
From a vain, vanquish'd, disappointed foe,
Like broken billows on her craggy cliffs,
Shall murmur at her feet in vain.

Syl. Methinks

I long to see this place.

Fer. My Sylvia, yes,

Thou shalt return : propitious gales invite.
Come, my Constantia.—Oh ! what mix'd emotions
Heave in this bosom at the sight of thee ?

Const. My heart runs o'er with ecstasy of joy,
And tears must speak my happiness. I long
To utter all my fond, fond thoughts ! to tell
The story of my woes, and hear of thine ;
While at each word our hearts shall melt within us,
And thrill with grief, with tenderness, and love.

Fer. The tale shall serve us in our future hours
Of tender intercourse, to sweeten pain,
To calm adversity, and teach our souls
To bend in love, in gratitude, and praise.
To the All-good on high, who thus befriends
The cause of innocence ; who thus rewards
Our suff'ring constancy ; whose hand, tho' slow,
Thus leads to rapture thro' a train of woe.

